DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 045 134 LI 002 297

AUTHOR	Mokhov, N. J.
TITLE	Libraries as a Means of Education and Enlightenment.
INSTITUTION	International Federation of Library Associations, Seven Oaks, Kent (England).
PUB DATE	Sep 70
NOTE	32p.; Speech delivered at the International Federation of Library Associations 36th Session, September, 1970, Moscow
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.70
DESCRIPTORS	*Independent Reading, *Independent Study, Library Circulation, Library Programs, *Library Science, Reading Habits, *Reading Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Russia

ABSTRACT

Soviet libraries play a great role in the spiritual life of the country, in the education and enlightenment of broad sections of the population, and in dissemination of the cultural, scientific and technical achievements among the people. Due to this care and broad initiative of the people, the U.S.S.R. has the largest number of networks of libraries in the world. In the Soviet Union, there are 350,000 libraries of various types evenly distributed on the vast territory of the country and in all national republics, thus giving every Soviet citizen an opportunity to use public book funds. The libraries of the socialist type contribute to the readers' independence and skill in the use of printed matter and audiovisual means. One of the chief concerns of the library promoting the cause of education by its own forms and methods is to educate via the cultivation of reading. The library's sphere of influence is steadily expanding and the propagandization of books is carried out more frequently beyond the library itself or in its reading rooms. The book goes directly to the workshops and fields, clubs and specialists' conferences, museums and cinema-theaters by means of exhibitions and literary reviews. (MF)

ED 045134

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

IFLA/FIAB

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

36th Session, September 1970, Moscow

N.J.MOKHOV

DEPUTY MINISTER OF
CULTURE OF THE USSR.

LIBRARIES AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

LI 002297

N.I.MOKHOV,

Deputy Minister of Culture of the USSR

LIBRARIES AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Comrades,

Social Transformations in the World and the Increasing Role of Enlightenment

We live in the era of profound socio-economic transformations. A whole system of states - a socialist one - with a new social structure has emerged.We witness the ultimate collapse of the colonial system.The scientific and technological revolution has been exerting a strong influence on the life of mankind.

The increase in demand for education,the latter's expansion and democratisation are one of the most important consequences of the above-mentioned processes.

Today various governmental and international organisations consider the questions pertaining to education.The UN General Assembly proclaimed the year of 1970 to be the international year of education.We should do all within our power so that this year would bring fresh and notable successes in the sphere of education.

In our age,hundreds of millions of people more and more actively participate in the historical process.The present-day level of economy and culture demands much more of man of whom the society expects not only elementary literacy but also professional knowledge

and high civil consciousness.This problem affects all countries and continents.

The majority of states have scored certain successes in the solution of this grandiose task.The number of primary,secondary and vocational schools has increased.Millions of children and teenagers in the developing countries learn how to read and write, become educated people and take an active part in the productive life and the scientific and technological progress.

Nevertheless,if we take absolute figures we shall see that the number of the illiterate in the world has not decreased.About 800 million adults and children of the school age do not read books because they are illiterate.In some vast areas,the amount of the illiterate is still high: 81,5 per cent of the population in Africa,67,8 per cent - in Asia and 50 per cent - in Latin America.

To put an end to illiteracy and reach a high level of general and special education meeting the requirements of our day is a humane goal which cannot but make mankind anxious.

Therefore we appreciate the fact that the discussion of the role played by libraries in education and enlightenment has been put on the agenda of the current session of the International Federation of Libraries' Associations.The USSR Ministry of Culture which executes direct guidance over the main network of public libraries and coordinates the activity of all Soviet libraries attaches paramount importance to the educational work performed by the libraries.

In this connection, I would like to elucidate the problem proceeding from the experience gained by the Soviet libraries and express the hope that this experience will be of interest t the librarians from other countries.

Cultural Revolution in the USSR and Some of its Results.

The Soviet socialist state had inherited from tsarism not only considerable economic backwardness but also low cultural level of the working masses. Before the revolution in Russia, outstanding achievements of oulture went hand in hand with the ignorance of the vast majority of the population and cultural backwardness of many peoples of the Russian Empire.

It is common knowledge that in Russia there were many prominent scientists, writers, artists, composers, actors whose creative work had enriched Russian and world culture.

However, in the country where spiritual values of world significance had been created many-millioned population was devoid of even elementary krowledge. The brilliant achievements of literature and art and the creative activity of the biggest writers, scientists, composers, artists, actors and musicians were available only to the privileged strata of the Russian society. In 1911 V.I.Lenin wrote with bitterness: "Tolstoi, a literary artist, is known to insignificant minority".

The picture of mass illiteracy in Russia gave a startling impression. Over 70 per cent of the population (at the age from 9 to 49) were illiterate. Women accounted for the highest percentage of the illiterate. The peoples of the outlying national districts of tsarist Russia were almost one hundred per cent

illiterate,particularly in the Far North and Central Asia.

The system of popular education was of class character.About 80 per cent of children and teenagers did not have access even to elementary school.The road to secondary and higher education was open only to the well-off part of the population.The number of libraries and the composition of their stocks did not meet the requirements of the society as far as literacy and vocational training were concerned.The country was lacking in books and libraries for masses of population.

In 1920,when talking to Clara Zetkin V.I.Lenin stressed the grave legacy of tsarism and the quite inadequate number of school and school-teachers. "Millions of children,he wrote,grow without upbringing and education.They remain ignorant and uncultured just like their fathers and grandfathers.How many talents perish,how many aspirations for light have been supressed!".Lenin emphasised that the Bolshevik Party ought to pay the people the "cultural debt" which the ruling classes and cliques of the old Russia had accumulated for many centuries.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution,the Soviet state and the Communist Party were to perform gigantic in their scope and character revolutionary transformations in politics,economics and culture of a huge country with multi-national population. It required the elaboration and implementation of the plan of a large scale cultural activity.

At the cradle of the Soviet culture there stood the ardent revolutionary,the greatest scientist of our epoch,the founder of the Soviet state Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.This year,the whole mankind is celebrating the centenary since his birth.Lenin said that the

aim of socialism is to place all the achievements of culture at the service of the working people,make them available to the people and secure the flowering of all forms of creative activity. Lenin pointed out that the upsurge of the general cultural level creates the solid and sound foundation on which powerful and unexhaustible forces for the development of arts,science and technology will grow.

When starting the creation of a new culture we were guided by directions of Lenin who repeatedly emphasised that its formation is inconceivable without continuation and development of the democratic part of the old society's culture and without assimilation and development of all the best and advanced elements in the culture and arts of all times and peoples.Great discoveries in science and the masterpieces in literature and art are not the monopoly of any particular class,but are values of the whole mankind. Lenin said that the socialist revolution will inherit and preserve them in the interests of the further development of culture.

As a result of the measures taken by the young Soviet power the treasures of culture which were proclaimed the property of all the people were saved and preserved for the descendants,for mankind.The treasures were great,but the people did not have elementary knowledge to assimilate them.

That is why the problems pertaining to popular education for over fifty years have been in the limelight in our state.Moreover, the solution of those problems was indispensable for the solution of the most important state and economic tasks thus determining the destiny of the nation.The exceptionally complicated task had been solved thanks to an entire system of state measures and heroic efforts of the masses themselves.

Everywhere in the Soviet Union illiteracy was liquidated, the system of popular education was radically reconstructed, a comprehensive network of schools of general education and vocational schools was set up, compulsory eight-year education was introduced and the transition to the ten-year school education is carried out and hundreds of new higher education establishments were open. The general educational, cultural and technical standard of the population went up to a considerable extent. A new Soviet intelligentsia has been educated.

Today, the Soviet Union is a country of one hundred per cent literacy. Over 56 per cent of the population have higher, secondary and incomplete secondary education. 80 million people, that is one third of the USSR's population, are engaged in one form of study or another. There are five million students in 800 higher educational establishments. In the Soviet Union, there are 870,000 research workers or 25 per cent of the research workers of the whole world. In 1918-1969, 2.273.000 titles of books in 89 languages of the Soviet nationalities and in 56 foreign languages have been put out. The total number of copies was over 35,000 million. In 1969 alone, 72,000 titles of books were put out and the number of copies reached 1.200 million. The development of national cultures and giving the peoples formerly plundered, in the sense of education, access to spiritual values are a tremendous achievement of the socialist state. Within a short historical period, these peoples took a stride from thick darkness to the summits of advanced science and culture. Thus, the triumph of socialism in our country has eliminated the age-old gap between culture and the people. For the first time, the notion of culture and people has become inseparable and united in

all the deepest and true meaning.

The Role Played by Libraries in the Education of the People

The general grandiose cultural upsurge of the popular masses was organically connected with the development of the librarianship.At every stage of the cultural revolution,libraries together with the other cultural and educational establishments exercised their specific function aimed at helping the cause of enlightenment. Lenin stressed the most important role played by the libraries in the development of culture and in raising the educational standards of the population. The October Revolution had just been accomplished,and the young government of workers and peasants was solving the urgent problems of war,peace and bread.Still,in those hard days,Lenin consulted the first People's Commissar of Education Anatoly V.Lunacharsky about the new ways of developing culture and education. "I attach great importance to libraries,said Lenin,you should work at this problem yourself.Summon the experts in librarianship.The books possess enormous power and the striving for them as a result of the revolution will greatly increase.It is nessesary to provide the readers with big reading rooms and ensure quick circulation of the books which should reach the readers".

Lenin regarded the library service as a component part of culture.He assessed the standards of culture on the basis of librarianship,and,as N.K.Krupskaya recollected,the state of the library service was for Lenin an indicator of the state of culture.

I would like to quote Lenin's words which are important for the understanding of this subject: "We should spare no efforts so that books and newspapers,as a rule,are distributed free of charge only among the libraries and reading rooms,within the framework of their networks which rightly render service to the whole country the whole mass of workers,soldiers,peasants.Then the people will strive for literacy,light and knowledge one hundred times stronger quicker,more successful.Then the cause of enlightenment will move forward by gigantic strides".I/

Thus,Lenin established a direct dependence between the development of the library service,the ability of the working people to take from the books everything necessary for the creation of a new society and education as a necessary prerequisite for the further economic and spiritual progress.

Since the appearence of the written language and since mankind had created the book - a powerful instrument for dissemination of knowledge - library and education are inseparable from each other and are developing in dialectical unity.Moreover,today education of broad masses is inconceivable without libraries.This idea has been repeatedly voiced by many prominent workers in culture and education.

Maxim Gorky,the great Soviet writer,said: "There are two forces which most successfully contribute to the education of a cultured man : art and science.Both are in the book".

At the same time,a book and a library not only serve as an important means of extending mental faculties of personality and

---

I/Complete Works,Vol.42,p.331.

its enrichment, but also to a considerable extent promote the growth of economy and social and oultural progress, since an educated man can work more efficiently and more actively participate in social life and create spiritual values.

The activity of the Soviet libraries aimed at rendering help to education was carried out in the following directions:

1. Active participation in the liquidation of illiteracy.
2. Help in getting secondary and higher education.
3. Assistance to the working masses in their self-education which actually lasts through their lifetime.

Libraries and Liquidation of Illiteracy

Among the first and most important actions taken by the Soviet state were the decrees connected with the organisation of a new system of popular education. The resolution of the 2 nd All-Russian Congress of the Soviets where the Soviet power had been proclaimed provided for the creation of the People's Commissariat for Education. The Decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of November 9 (22), 1917 signed by Lenin and Lunacharsky established the State Commission on Enlightenment. On October 16, 1918 the "Statute of a United Labour School of the RSFSR" was published.

On December 26, 1919 Lenin signed the Decree of the Council of the People's Commissars on the "Liquidation of Illiteracy Among the Population of the RSFSR" of July 19, 1920. The Council of the People's Commissars issued a decree "On the Establishment of the

All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for the Liquidation of Illiteracy".

Best activists of the Communist Party and the Soviet state were placed at the head of the commissions struggling against illiteracy."Down with illiteracy" , a mass voluntary society,was set up as well as other associations which carried out extensive work in the countryside and in towns. Millions of people, old and young, started learning to read and write. A genuine and consistent war against illiteracy was waged for two decades.By 1940, 50 million illiterate and 30 million almost illiterate persons learned to read and write, thus a solid foundation was laid for the development of science and dissemination of culture.

In our country, the libraries were the most active participants in the struggle against illiteracy.At the libraries,illiteracy liquidation centres and reading aloud circles were organised. Librarians were not only propegandists of books but also teachers - they taught to read and write,technique of reading and trained future readers.In the national republics.in the countryside above all, this type of work was combined with the struggle against age-old religious and other prejudices.

The history of library sercice of that time is abundant in exsmples illustrating selfless acivity of the librarians who were the vehicles of culture and knowledge for the people."Without that N.K.Krupskaya stressed,three-fourth of the work aimed at liquidating illiteracy would have been in vain; the ability to read and write acquired as a result of colossal efforts would have not secured access of the masses to the treasury of mankind's experience and the ability to read and write would have not given them what it could give".

In order to show what significance was attached to the libraries in assimilating knowledge we shall quote the "Memorandum to the Reader" issued in Petrograd in 1919.It ran as follows:

"Comrade...As the proletarian revolution wants you to be sober-and clear-minded, you should not fail to get a book at your local library. We are sure that neither a single teacher nor a single school will enlighten you as much as will your local library.And the most important thing,Comrade, is that books will help you abolish the most blameful inequality - the inequality of intellect. Comrade, take care that each book should be passed through hundreds of thousands of hands and deliver to every man its message of truth, reason and good advice.Do not fail to get a book at your local library...".

The state have done a great deal in publishing special literature for the readers with a limited scope of knowledge and sending it to the libraries.Books in large print and with many illustrations written in popular language wer published.In 1924 the State Publishing House put out 100,000 series consisting of 100 popular books each. In 1925 alone,"Down with Illiteracy" Publishing House printed five million primers and books for the almost illiterate people.

Active and systematic work of the libraries with the help of primers, books for initial reading,interesting stories with a simple and fascinating subject and special reading-books helped the process of illiteracy liquidation not to turn into an aim in itself, but served as a basis for gradual self-development of man and inculcation in him the skills of reading aimed at mastering the foundations of culture.

When socialist economy was being created and when the problem of training technically educated personnel was especially

urgent, the libraries came out to solve this problem too. Mil-
lions of skilled workers,hundreds of thousands of specialists
should thank the Soviet libraries for the latters' contribution
to their training.

Library and school

As it is known, children possess a particularly keen sense for books which leave a deep imprint for the rest of their lives. Taking into account the immense influence that literature exerts on the children N.K.Krupskaya, as early as the late I920s, said that the children need books just to the same extent as they need schools.

In our country a lot has been done so that the children could read books and attend libraries.

There is a school library in every eight-year and secondary school functioning in close contact with the teachers,while in elementary schools there are small stocks of books indispensable for the children.All in all in this country there are about I70,000 school libraries attended by 39 million children.An important feature of the Soviet library system is the creation of an extensive network of special children's libraries as centres of out-of-school education and as methodological centres directing all libraries attended by children.In our country, there are over six thousand independent children's libraries-republican, regional,central, city and district children's libraries. Besides, there are over 70.000 libraries for children living in the countryside and many thousands of children's branches in other mass libraries. All school-children attend Libraries and every pupil, alongside the textbooks, gets books for extra-curriculum reading and learns how to acquire knowledge

independently. In this connection,all children's libraries regar it as their main tasks to teach the children the fundamental principles of reading,to encourage their interest for self-educational reading, assist in choosing future profession and promo inquiry and information service to help teachers,instructors, Young Pioneer leaders and parents of the pupils.

Today in the USSR a radical reconstruction of the entire sy tem of elementary and secondary education is under way. The reconstruction is aimed at reducing the duration of elementary education from four to three years,introducing subject-teaching beginning with the fourth year of study and bringing all the school textbooks and curricula into conformity with the latest achievements of science.Thus,now children become "grown-up" earl due to the influence of the school itself, but to a greater exte due to the conditions of life including television,cinema and radio. Children are increasingly becoming too grown-up for children's book and their inquisitive mind demands new books about modern world. In this connection,we undertake vigorous measures aimed at reconstructing the activity of the school and children's libraries so that they meet new requirements.

Libraries pay more attention to their work with the childr under school age and to their preparation for school. All libraries reconsider the composition of the openly available stocks and organise permanent exhibitions "Beyond the school knowledge". They prepare the third-year-pupils for subject-teaching and for using libraries' sections assigned for the senior pupils.

V.I.Lenin State Library of the USSR together with the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences elaborated and tested in schools an optimal course of "Fundamental Principles of Reading" and now complete the creation of "circles of reading" for the pupils

of different age.

Still, much is left to be done:

to train all the pupils to systematic and diversified readi in the libraries;

to improve considerably the stock of the books for children in rural libraries.

Close ties between libraries and schools, clear-cut definition of their role in guiding children's reading, struggle against parallelism and duplication in libraries' activity will improve the guidance over children's reading, enhance the role of books and libraries in their teaching and education.

The Role Played by Libraries in Training Specialists for National Economy and Culture

The number of students in 800 higher educational establishments and over 4,000 secondary special institutions in our count has topped nine million. This is a gigantic youth detachment. On how the boys and girls in the universities, institutes and technical schools are educated and brough up depends the future of science and technical progress, the standard of creative activity in the sphere of culture.

The Soviet state pays much attention not only to the construction of institutes and laboratories, quality of lectures and practical training of students but also to libraries.

There are libraries in all educational esbablishments and s me of them, above all the libraries of the universities and the biggest polytechnical and other institutes, are among the largest

and are of state significance.Among them are libraries of the Moscow, Leningrad,Kazan, Kiev, Kharkov, Tomsk and Irkutsk Universities, the Ural and Novocherkassk Polytechnical Institutes, the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy and other educational establishments.

Each library of a higher educational establishment or a special secondary school is part and parcel of the entire system of education.It provides with literature the whole process of treining future specialists, promotes scientific and technical creative activity of the students and organizes teaching of fundamentals of library and bibliographic knowledge.At the same time, the libraries in higher educational institutions help professors, teachers, post-graduates and students in research work.

It should be pointed out that in our country the problem of training specialists for national economy is solved both by the libraries of the educational institutions and other libraries.

As hundreds of thousands of people without giving up work are getting higher or secondary education studying by correspondence or attending evening courses, the mass libraries play an important role. They constantly receive necessary literature while the librarians pay special attention to those readers who are simultaneously students and workers or students and farmers. All the other libraries of the USSR including V.I.Lenin State Library of the USSR,the Library of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the State Public Scientific and Technical Library of the USSR, the State Public Scientific and Technical Library

of the USSR, the State Public Scientific and Technical Library o: the USSR, the M.E.Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library take part in this kind of activity. It should be emphasised that while the libraries of the enterprises, collective farms and sta farms should continue to carry out this task, the role of big scientific and technical libraries should obviously consist in meeting special scientific and production demands of the young scientists, designers and other specialists. As far as the proces of education is concerned it should almost completely be provide by the libraries of the educational establishments.

Libraries' Activity Aimed at Rendering Assistance to Self-Education of the Adults

Libraries serve as the chief basis for the self-education broad masses. They do a great deal of work covering both sides self-education-professional and general.

The whole network of the state mass libraries- one of the most numerous in our country - regards as the most importa direction of its everyday activity the development and deepenin of forms of self-education embracing all categories of readers.

The advantages of secondary and higher education are unde- niable. Nevertheless, no education can fully satisfy the unex- haustable demands of man for knowledge about the new phenomena happening in rapidly growing science, technology, culture and politics. Such demands can be satisfied only through self- education which everyone should undergo during his whole life.

time . The great Russian poet A.S.Pushkin said:" Reading is the best education". Today those who do not choose to lag behind and want to keep abreast with the age can no longer content themselves with what they learnt in the educational establishment even if it was a higher one. But this is only one side of self-education aimed at maintaining the professional skill at a certain level.

However, there is another side of self-education which is no less important. As a rule, man's interests and requirements go beyond the limits of his profession and he is inclined to enrich his knowledge. The so-called general self-education is aimed at promoting man's allround development and this means provision of optimum conditions for the realisation of personality's capabilities and permanent enrichment of the spiritual world.

This is a problem of great social and ideological significance since it is a matter of world outlook, creative assimilation of the past and present culture, civil education and satisfaction of individual inclinations. The basic goal of general self-education is to elaborate a truly scientific world outlook and educate personality in the spirit of humanism and social justice.

All types of libraries in one way or another deal with the problems of vocational training. Tens of millions of workers. collective farmers and specialists in national economy and culture widely use the diversified network of libraries to raise their

professional standards, to study advanced production experience and achievements of the Soviet and foreign science and technology. Rural, district, city, regional and republican libraries, the entire network of specialised libraries render assistance to the representatives of different specialities. Thus, today the library in the countryside has become a genuine centre of culture and information. Hundreds of thousands of agronomists, live-stock specialis machine-operators and other spcialists of agriculture as well as rural intelligentsia and youth rightly regard rural libraries as a source of raising their professional standards. In regional libraries there are section assigned fo agricultural workers, patent and technical sections or section dealing with study of local lore or music. These are recognised and established forms of raising professional standards with the help of books, the centres carrying out purposeful guidance over reading.

They apply various methods aimed at achieving the best solution: group information, individual work with the readers, subject acquaintance with considerable amounts of books, drawing books closer to the production etc. Naturally we have mentioned just a few methods and forms applied by libraries and aimed at helping professional self-education.

As far as general self-education goes the scope of libraries' activity is also wide.

Man with a high standard of education makes high demands of the library and asks for a considerable improvement in the system of information and propaganda of books. Therefore the activity of libraries in the sphere of

general self-education is carried out along the following main lines: 1)political self-education; 2) aesthetic self-education; 3) self-education in natural sciences; 4) technical self-education.

The readers display especially keen interest in socio-political sciences. According to the data contained in the special study conducted by the V.I. Lenin State Library of the USSR the socio-political litarature accounts for 60-90 per cent of the books read by such categories of readers as workers engineers, teachers and students. In the jubilee year of 1970, the demand for the works by V.I. Lenin as well as publications about his life and activity showed a sharp increase.

In the USSR practically everybody reads fiction. Giving preference to the contemporary Soviet litarature the Sovie readers, at the same time, display keen interest in classical litarary legacy of our country and other countries as well as present-day works of foreign writers.

The Soviet state does all within its power to make the best patterns of national and world culture available to th working masses. The immortal works of Pushkin, Leo Tolstoi, Shevchenko, Balzac, Dickens and other great writers, poets and playwrights serve the cause of educating new generations of Soviet people.

The dream of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin about the time when culture in our country would belong "not to the upper ten thousand" but to the whole of the people, to the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, has come true.

It is indicative that the Soviet Union takes the first place in putting out foreign literature in translation. The books by the following authors were most frequently publishe

in the USSR: W, Shakespear - 316 times in 28 languages, 5,8 million copies; M. Twain - 314 times in 28 languages, 16,3 million copies; H. Balzac-283 times in 18 languages F. Schiller - 196 times in 19 languages, 2,3 million copies; M. Servantes - 114 times in 16 languages, 5,6 million copies. The fact that giving answers to the questionaire of the V.I. Lenin State Library of the USSR the readers have mentioned about 100 names of the prerevolutionary and over 300 names of the Soviet writers, 80 classics of foreign literature and over 90 contemporary foreign writers testifies to the high standards of their aesthetic knowledge.

Only ten years ago, the books on art were read by a small number of specialists. Now we witness an increasing general thirst for aesthetic education.

In the Soviet Union there are 543 theatres including 143 specialised theatres for children and youth, 1012 art galleries and museums, 202 orchestras, choirs and dancing companies, 39 film-studios, 25 conservatoires, 228 musical schools, 4166 children's schools of music and art. 12 million people participate in amateur talent activity. The above-cited facts and figures show the scope of the people's aesthetic education.

In the libraries the aesthetic education helps the readers to find the necessary works of literature and art, musical works and works of fine arts. Sections of books on art, musical literature and of tape-recordings and records have been established in republican, regional, city and many of district libraries. A network of specialised musical libraries is being set up. The libraries maintain close contacts with the unions of writers, artists, musicians as well as with theatres, museums, philharmonic societies and cinema-theatres.

Before the October revolution, science was one of the

privileges of a few highly educated persons. Now the scientific knowledge is becoming increasingly available to the working masses. It is vividly proved by the keen interest displayed by various sections of population in the scientific and popular-scientific literature.

The propaganda of books carried out by the public libraries in the USSR is aimed at creating a truly scientific view of the world. The materialist and atheistic trend of libraries' activity with the literature on philosophy and natural sciences is unquestionable. The Soviet people like many other people of good will exhibiting interest in the successes scored in outer spece and atomic energy realise that these colossal achievements should be used for the benefit of mankind. It should be pointed out that the readers have at their disposal not only the Soviet publications but also the best scientific works translated from the foreign languages into the languages of the peoples of the USSR.

The number of books on natural sciences and technology has considerably increased. Such books are put out by numerous publishing houses in this country. We witness both quantitative and qualitative changes in the field of popular-scientific literature. A Soviet reader with a secondary education, at the minimum, takes from the library popular-scientific books about main directions of scientific and technological progress, the construction of material and technical base of communism, the latest achievements of science and technology.

One of the peculiar features of the self-educational reading of the Soviet people in that it is of complex character. The data of the concrete sociological surveys made in recent years show that the reading of many people is truly diversified.

The analysis of the data collected by almost two hundred libraries confirned that the reader in the socialist society is interested in many spheres of national and world culture and is a personality striving for harmonious development.

The social composition of the Soviet readers is also typical. Workers, peasants, women and representatives of formerly backward peoples determine to a considerable extent the readers' structure in our libraries. Each of them enriches his knowledge here raising both his cultural and professional standards.

So, the general educational function of the libraries is great and complicated. The libraries deal with various categories of readers thus helping them in their studies and raising their professional and educational standards.

The enlightenment of the people became possible thanks to the rich stocks of the Soviet libraries which amount to 2,600 million copies. In the USSR the average number of books per person from the stocks of mass libraries alone amounts to five copies. The books in our country are not only available to everybody but also reflect the demands of masses and the needs of th construction of a new society.

The active and purposeful character of our libraries' activity finds its experession in the fact that by the very selection of books for public use they contribute to the educatio of a man of the new society having nothing to do with the ideas o nationalism and racialism. In the Soviet librarianship there appeared a new term, "socially useful stock", meaning not a random accumulation of printed matter but a thought-out and purposeful choice of books bearing in mind the prospects of their use by the people in the interests of broad masses and the progress of society. The Soviet books earich the spiritual world

of the people and open up new vistas before them. The Soviet librarians remember the words of N.K. Krupskaya: "Do all you can so that the best, most talented books are read by everybody."

According to the statistical data available from spceial experiments and surveys the educational importance of libraries under socialism is constantly increasing despite a powerful development of means of communication. The new and comparatively young audiovisual means have in no way pressed the book. On the contrary, they have consolidated its positions and m it possible to understand its unique spacific features and the ways of the books' interaction with the other sources of information. Therefore the significance of the Soviet libraries as the organisers of reading and use of the books is increasingly growin We have data according to which about 65 per cent of the demand for books is formed under the direct influence of the libraries and the recommendations of the librarians and the library and bibliographic sources of information (catalogues, books' exhibitions, bibliographic indices, inquiries etc.)

The libraries of the socialist type contribute to the readers' independence and their skill in the use of printing matter and audio-visual means. One of the chief concerns of the library promoting the cause of education by its own forms and methods is to educate the culture of reading. Its sphere of influence is steadily expanding and the propaganda of books is carried out increasingly often not only in the library itself or in its reading rooms. The book comes directly to the workshops and fields, clubs and specialists' conferences, museums and cinema-theatres by means of exhibitions and literary reviews. The libraries actively participate in the new forms

of the books' propaganda by organising large-scale readers' conferences and discussions.

The Soviet libraries are open on Saturdays and Sundays and function at the time convenient for the working people. We regard this fact as one more expression of the care taken by the state about the leisure time of the Soviet people so that the reading becomes an organic element of their everyday life.

The Scope of Library Construction in the USSR

Since libraries play a great role in the spiritual life of the country, in the education and enlightenment of broad section of the population, in dissemination of the cultural, scientific and technical achievements among the people, the Soviet state showed and keeps showing deep concern about the development of the library service. Many decrees and decisions of the party and state organs were adopted to this effect.

Due to this care and broad people's initiative the USSR has the most numerous network of libraries in the world. In the Soviet Union there are 350,000 libraries of various types evenly distributed on the vast territory of the country and in all national republics

Thus giving every Soviet citizen an opportunity to use public book funds. On the average, there is one stationary library with one or several staff employees per less than one thousand rural inhabitants and per three and a half thousand urban inhabitants. Each village Soviet- in the vicinity Of Moscow or in the Kamchatka, in the Far North or in the Central Asia - has two stationary libraries.

The Soviet state pays much attention to the further expansion of the libraries' network and consolidation of their material basis. In 1959-1969 alone, 20,000 new libraries were commissioned and 15,000 new buildings for libraries were constructed. The number of libraries, particularly mass ones in the Central Asian republics as well as in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia and others has considerably increased. Thousands of libraries in towns and villages are equipped with modern facilities and technical means thus making it possible to improve the library service.

The prestige of reading in the Soviet Union is very high, and the annual growth in the number of readers of the libraries clearly testifies to this indisputable fact. According to the official data as by January I, 1970 (school libraries are not considered) there were over 130 million readers in the Soviet libraries, but actually the number of the registered readers who attend our libraries amounts to 170 million, That is over 70 per cent of the country's population. It is only natural that there are readers who attend two and even more libraries. This figure, however, is extremely convincing and gives an idea about the the scope of the library service in the USSR. Thus, in our country.

reading has acquired social character and become an organic need of the people since the society itself while implementing its great ideas is deeply interested in the working masses to widely use the books as a source of allround development of personality The task consists in every family's using public library, and this task is being successfully solved. Today a more socially significant goal is put forward - every citizen should attend a library.

We regard the practical realisation of Lenin's idea about systematic organization of libraries' network as an important achievement of the cultural revolution in our country. The principles of a single libraries' network are the essence of the Soviet library system. In the Soviet Union the libraries are not isolated cultural centres but state-owned public ideological institutions inseparably linked with each other and actively participating in the social and economic life of society. The typical features of a single system of the library service which found their practical expression in the Soviet Union are the Soviet libraries' unity of tasks and aims (irrespective of their type and affiliation), centralised creation and constant renewal of the book stocks, rational use of the book stocks on the All-Union scale, the single plan of the library service, coordination and cooperation in libraries' activity, centralised guidance and, finally, financing the libraries from the state budget. Over fifty years of practical experience confirmed the vitality of Lenin's directions and proved that the single system of the library service has stood the test of time.

We attach special importance to the public initiative

in the library activities. Despite the fact that the main bulk of libraries are financed and maintained by the state (besides many scientific and specialised libraries, about 70 per cent of the mass libraries in the USSR are financed from the state buoget) the trade unions the Young Communist League, collective farms and cooperative societies do a great deal for the libraries. Millions of workers, collective farmers and intellectuals are members of the libraries' councils and take an active part in the propaganda of books.

The peculiarities of the Soviet library service organically ensue from the regularities governing the development of socialist culture and education. The centralised character of the library activity is of special importance. It finds its expression in the state centralised and systematic supply of the libraries with books, in the functioning of the system providing for a compulsory sending to the libraries a copy of each publication, in the rational arrangement of the libraries' network and in the introduction of the state standards of the library activity.

There are also other typical features of the library activity: its multi-national character; mass character of the readers audience and availability of libraries; free library service; the fact that the people are interested in the development of libraries and the most effective form of the book propaganda. These are the features inherent in the Soviet libraries' activity and they promote the growth of the libraries' educational functions and their turning into a base for education.

UPSURGE OF THE PEOPLE'S CULTURAL STANDARDS AND THE TASKS OF THE LIBRARIES

When giving an outline of certain cases of interaction between libraries and popular education - as far as it is possible within the framework of this brief report - we do not claim that all these problems have been solved in our country.

The library today is a means of active dissemination of ideas and rational use of leisure time, a means of raising the educational standards of the population and a laboratory of mental work. The role played by the libraries in the development of culture and economy is increasingly growing. The library is becoming a most important instrument of scientific and technological revolution making a substantial contribution to the process of artistic self-education of masses. Perhaps, the most important function of the library is that it helps to form man who is an active builder of a new society.

The experience accumulated by the Soviet libraries proves that the prospects of the libraries' development are quite promising. Let us mention just some of the trends which are to become the major ones in the near future.

Firstly, it is the increase in the number of the readers, making library service available to all inhabitants of our country and placing at their disposal all public book stocks. We must not fail to mention the fact that considerable collections of books in the majority of the Soviet families provides a good foundation for expanding the sphere of public libraries.

The libraries within the system of scientific information during the period of the so-called "informational explosion" comprise another important problem.

The role played by the libraries when they render information service to the science and production is steadily growing. As a result of the continuing specialisation of science which is a trend of the scientific and technological progress, the network of specialised libraries emerged. One should not forget, however, about the integration of sciences which predetermines the demand for literature on adjacent problems and widens the scope of interests of scientists and specialists. Hence, the conclusion about a close interaction of the public and specialised libraries aimed at satisfying the increased demands of the readers.

Another important aspect of this problem is the vital necessity of accelerating the entire process of receiving scientific information by the readers. To solve this problem it is necessary, in the first place, to introduce, on a wide scale, modern means of mechanisation and automation in the library and bibliographic processes. Libraries in different countries have accumulated considerable experience. Nevertheless, the means of mechanisation and automation have not been widely applied yet in the majority of libraries and the implementation of this programme would require much effort.

Further improvement of libraries' activity is inconceivable without deepening the scientific foundations of the propaganda of books and readers' guidance. Here the Soviet specialists in

librarianship mean pedagogical process of purposeful influence upon the content and character of reading, choice of books and their mastering.

It is only natural that readers' guidance in the libraries' activity aimed at raising the educational standards of the population is impossible without complex inquiring the readers while using the methods already available for philosophy, sociology and psychology. If we know the reader, his needs and interests it will make it possible for the libraries to exert direct influence on the activity of the publishing houses and to have their say about the circulation of books and magazines.

We face now the task of using more flexibly and creatively all old and new forms of bringing literature closer to the reader. This means the enhancement of the recommendational bibliography, which propagandises the best books and suggests a certain system of reading. The bibliographic methods of examing, evaluating and disclosing the content of the books is the corner stone of the entire libraries' activity aimed at propagandising books. The libraries, in their turn, serve as a basis for testing the elaborated methods for bibliography.

Ladies and Gentlemen. Comrades,

The Soviet specialists in librarianship highly evaluate the activity of the International Federation of Libraries' Associations which makes a substantial contribution to the development of the library service, the exchange of experience accumulated by libraries in various countries and consolidation of international cultural relations and friendship among nation:

In this connection we approve the draft of the long-term programme of the IFLA envisaging a number of large scale measures aimed at strengthening cooperation with similar international organizations in the fields of information, reprography, archives; at extending research into the important problems of librarianship and bibliography; at improving the organizational structure of the Federation in order to raise the efficacy of its activity and establishing closer ties between libraries and libraries' association.

The above-mentioned measures will undoubtedly promote the social role played by the libraries in the development of the world culture and science and contribute to the process of turning libraries into a still more important instrument of educating and enlightenning the peoples.

Allow me on behalf of the Ministry of Culture of the USSR to wish the IFLA further succeses in the implementation of thes noble tasks.